

SITUATION REPORT NO. 13

INCIDENT NO. 98-001

DATE: September 4, 1998 TIME: 12:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Devils Lake Basin and eastern North Dakota flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: Devils Lake at Creel Bay measured 1,444.03 feet MSL on September 4.

The N.D. State Water Commission has reported that water levels in Devils Lake area wetlands were high this year, in part, because of increased runoff and a high ground water table. In some low-lying areas, ground water is at or near land surface. In higher elevation areas, water table depth ranges from five to seven feet below land surface. On the west side of the city of Devils Lake, ground water has been moving toward the Creel Bay area of Devils Lake. Near the city wastewater lagoons, ground water elevations were lower than the level of Devils Lake, causing water to move toward the shallow water table. Higher ground water levels, particularly in the northern and eastern portions of the city, are primarily due to increased ground water recharge as a result of increased precipitation and runoff.

Representatives of Farm Service Agency (FSA), U.S. Department of Agriculture, estimate that 1,361,600 acres have flooded this year in North Dakota. Of the acres, 1,024,390 acres are cropland and 337,210 are pasture. Of the total acreage flooded in North Dakota, 23 percent – or 236,839 acres – are in the Devils Lake Basin. The FSA assessed flooded acreage in nine Devils Lake Basin counties, Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Nelson, Pierce, Ramsey, Rolette, Towner and Walsh.

Heavy rains, high winds and hail caused widespread damage throughout North Dakota in August, with the increased precipitation contributing to high water tables throughout the state. In Morton County, preliminary estimates indicate heavy rain and high winds on August 21 caused more than \$50,000 in damages to culverts, bridges and roads. During a storm earlier that week, a semi-tractor was overturned on Interstate 94 near New Salem. The Morton County Office of Emergency Management reported on August 18 the following rainfall amounts: 1.5 inches in Almont; 2 inches in Flasher; 3 inches and hail in Glen Ullin; 2.5 inches in Hebron; and 1.5 to 2.5 inches in New Salem.

In Grant County, rainfall from the August 21 storm ranged from one to 11 inches. Golf-ball to baseball-size hail damaged crops, vehicles, roads, fences, bridges and buildings. The New Leipzig Fire Department rescued an individual after heavy rains washed his farm tractor off the road.

During the August 21 storm, Hettinger County officials reported hail, high winds and rainfall ranging from three to 5 ½ inches. Roads, bridges and culverts were damaged during the storm. Crop losses resulted from an August 12 hail storm and heavy rain and hail that occurred August 21 and 22. Reports from agriculture officials indicate yield losses ranged from 10 to 35 percent for approximately 280,150 acres of wheat, corn, crame, sunflowers, flax, mustard, buckwheat, canola and safflower. Fifty farm dwellings

sustained \$15,000 in damages, and damage to 50 pieces of farm machinery and equipment totaled \$5,000. The Hettinger County Board of Commissioners issued a disaster declaration following these storms.

Other counties affected by heavy precipitation include McIntosh County, where rainfall ranged from two to four inches during a late August storm. This heavy rainfall caused one road to wash out,

temporarily restricting emergency access to two farms. Repair efforts required 20 loads of dirt and gravel.

A heavy downpour of rain, measuring in excess of two inches, in Rolette County caused localized flooding of businesses and homes in the Belcourt and Rolla areas. During a storm 10 days earlier, the area received four to six inches of rainfall. Local officials prepared for groundwater- and seepage-related problems. A manufacturing plant west of Belcourt was seeking sandbags to dike part of its operations area.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No change from previous reports.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: In Rolette County, firefighters used pumper trucks to pump rainwater into the sewer system and away from businesses in an effort to help prevent water seepage.

The N.D. State Water Commission has issued an emergency permit for an emergency drain designed to lower water in the McLeod area. Residents have been coping with water-related problems to include high water table, contaminated wells and septic system problems.

A contractor working to build up N.D. Highway 57 over Devils Lake should complete the dirt work by the end of September, the N.D. Department of Transportation has reported. The road will have to be raised an additional six to 12 feet. The contractor plans to work until fall freeze-up.

Officials of the City of Kindred recently issued a Disaster Declaration due to 1998 flooding.

The Sargent County Commission signed a resolution on August 18 urging state and federal agencies to assist in planning, funding and implementing a solution to alleviate the potential of future flood-related disasters.

The North Dakota National Guard sent eight tons of tentage to North Carolina as part of efforts to assist disaster victims impacted by Hurricane Bonnie. Twenty "temper tents" stored and maintained by the 119th Fighter Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard, were flown to Charlotte, N.C., for possible use as emergency shelters.

FEMA1220-DR-ND (1998 flooding)

The deadline for filing for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) has been extended to 5 p.m. October 2. Because the program became available as harvesting started, many farmers and farm workers have been in the field and have not made claims. DUA is a federal program providing jobless benefits to individuals who are not eligible for state unemployment benefits. Those who may be eligible include self-employed individuals, business owners, farmers, farm workers and migrant farm workers. Job Service North Dakota has received 545 claims for DUA. Claim amounts as of August 31 totaled \$423,294.

As of September 1, a total of 1,401 North Dakotans had contacted the FEMA teleregistration center to register for Individual Assistance Programs made available as part of FEMA-1220-DR-ND recovery efforts. Of the applicants, to date 397 applicants have received \$474,095 in grants from FEMA's Disaster Housing Programs. Disaster victims may be referred to one or more programs.

North Dakota's Individual and Family Grant (IFG) has received 549 applications for assistance and paid \$75,710 to date to disaster victims of 1998 flooding in 16 federally declared counties and two Indian Reservations.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has approved \$158,700 in low-interest loans for homeowners and business owners. SBA staff members have received 217 applicants.

As of September 1, a total of 121 Notice of Interest (NOI) applications had been received for

participation in the Public Assistance Program. Applicants include: 16 counties; two reservations; 58 cities; three private non-profit organizations; three electrical cooperatives; 12 schools and universities; nine park boards; 12 water resource districts; one rural utility; one historical society; and four state agencies. September 5 is the deadline for receipt of NOIs for Cass, LaMoure and Walsh Counties, the last three counties added to the disaster declaration. The Processing Center in Bismarck has received 407 Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) and has obligated funds for 322 DSRs. To date, \$7,605,900 in infrastructure repairs, emergency work and debris removal has been determined to be eligible statewide. Public Assistance inspectors have completed inspections in Dickey and Stutsman Counties.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: No change from previous reports.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director